United Nations S/PV.7905

Security Council

Seventy-second year

Provisional

7905th meeting
Thursday, 23 March 2017, 10.10 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Johnson/Mr. Rycroft	(United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)
Members:	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Mr. Llorentty Solíz
	China	Mr. Liu Jieyi
	Egypt	Mr. Aboulatta
	Ethiopia	Ms. Zemene
	France	Mr. Delattre
	Italy	Mr. Amendola
	Japan	Mr. Bessho
	Kazakhstan	Mr. Ali
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	Senegal	Mr. Baba Cissé
	Sweden	Ms. Wallström
	Ukraine	Mr. Prystaiko
	United States of America	Ms. Sison
	Uruguay	Mr. Bermúdez

Agenda

The situation in Somalia

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17-07641 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Somalia

The President: I want to warmly welcome the Ministers and other representatives to the Security Council Chamber. Their presence today underscores the importance of the subject under discussion.

In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Somalia to participate in this meeting.

On behalf of the Council, I welcome His Excellency Mr. Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed Farmajo, President of the Federal Republic of Somalia, who is joining today's meeting via video-teleconference from Nairobi.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Mr. Michael Keating, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia; and Mr. Francisco Caetano José Madeira, Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia and Head of the African Union Mission in Somalia.

On behalf of the Council, I welcome Mr. Madeira, who is joining the meeting via video-teleconference from Mogadishu.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2017/226, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

The Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Bolivia (Plurinational State of), China, Egypt, Ethiopia, France, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Russian Federation, Senegal, Sweden, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America and Uruguay

The President: The draft resolution received 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 2346 (2017).

I now give the floor to Mr. Keating.

Mr. Keating: As the Secretary-General said on his first field visit since he took office, Somalia is experiencing a moment of both tragedy and hope. Tragedy, because a drought-induced humanitarian crisis is now engulfing the country, with the imminent risk of famine. Hope, because the recent electoral process has created the momentum for fresh political engagement among Somalis. The announcement 48 hours ago of the establishment of the Cabinet, which includes six women, is another important step forward.

More than 6 million Somalis — half the total population — are now in need of assistance. Nearly 3 million, mainly women and children, require immediate lifesaving support, and they include growing numbers of displaced people living in miserable conditions. Somalis, including politicians, business people, civil society and members of the diaspora, are taking responsibility for drought response. That distinguishes Somalia from other countries facing humanitarian catastrophe. President Farmajo declared a national disaster within days of taking office. He is using all available platforms to mobilize national and international support. Access remains a challenge, including in areas controlled by Al-Shabaab. But compared to 2011, when 260,000 people died, the scope for responding to the crisis is greater. Cell-phone coverage and money-transfer options have expanded; data on needs and assessment has improved; controls on resources and partner-vetting are stronger; and operational capacities have grown.

Humanitarian partners are scaling up the response in various ways, including through the private sector and with cash programming in affected areas. More people are now being reached with food aid, nutritional support, health-care services and access to safe water. But much more is needed. The most urgent challenges include funding for immediate lifesaving action, in particular for the cholera response, which has now affected 11 of Somalia's 18 regions. Treatment centres and units are being opened throughout the country, but the disease continues to spread. A rapid expansion of treatment and preventive measures is urgently needed

before the rains, which will only exacerbate the problem further.

The famine-prevention operational plan is seeking $825 million in order to reach 5.5 million people by June. The plan is currently 32 per cent funded. Funding and cash-flow constraints prevented a significant increase in response activities at the beginning of the year, and more resources will be needed by the end of March if we are to enable the partners to reach those affected before it is too late. I welcome the recent generous contributions made by many countries in response to the calls from the Somali Government and the United Nations for assistance, including a very generous one from your Government, Mr. President.

Had the electoral process not delivered a result accepted as legitimate, drought-response efforts would be much more difficult. Instead, the electoral process has created a sense of hope. The new Parliament is more diverse, and its membership is younger and includes more women than any before it. The elections were largely peaceful and were not derailed by Al-Shabaab. The African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and Somali security and intelligence forces did a great job of protecting electoral sites. The presidential election was conducted transparently. The former President, Mr. Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, deserves credit for a smooth and peaceful handover.

The elation that greeted President Farmajo on 8 February transcended clan and regional lines. The outcome of the process has generated widespread goodwill. As Prime Minister Dessalegn of Ethiopia said,

> Somalis have made history and set a great example to countries ... emerging from conflict".

The complexity and imperfections of the electoral process have not diminished the expectation that there must be one-person, one-vote elections in 2020. Preparations must now begin to establish the necessary legal and administrative framework, lay the groundwork for inclusive elections and enable women to compete on equal terms with men. To that end, the United Nations will field a needs-assessment mission this week.

The new Government and Parliament now have an opportunity to use the goodwill to reboot efforts to build a functional and inclusive Federal State and to tackle the socioeconomic, structural and political issues that make millions of Somali women, men and children so vulnerable. For a functional and truly sovereign Federal Somalia must find ways to rely less on foreign funds and more on its own resources. Unless Somalia can start attracting serious investment and generate domestic revenues, State-building will remain only an aspiration, and the country will remain perilously dependent and vulnerable to weather-related shocks. That will require not only greater institutional capacity but also a settlement between the Government and the private sector. Taxes should be collected by the State, in return for assurances that funds will be accounted for and used to provide basic services, including security and the rule of law.

The President and Prime Minister have committed to making improvements in public financial management, transparency and accountability, including vigorous steps to fight corruption, which they see as drivers of insecurity. Those tasks will not be easy. They deserve our support, including incentives for the private sector. Support is needed to clear Somalia's arrears and allow it to move along a path towards debt relief.

A more immediate challenge is to eliminate the scourge of terrorism. The cost is just too high, both in terms of human life and lost opportunities for Somalia, but also for its neighbours and the international community, including countries that are serving on the Council. Success in degrading and dismantling Al-Shabaab requires a multi-pronged approach, embedded in a political strategy led by the Somali Government. That approach will need to embrace support for AMISOM's operations, Somalian security-sector reform, a resolution of local conflicts, the stabilization and expansion of State authority in liberated areas, and it should address the deficits in governance and the rule of law that give Al-Shabaab oxygen.

Somalis want to assume greater responsibility for their own security. There is some way to go. The Somali security forces are underresourced, irregularly paid, fragmented, often privatized and largely unaccountable. But building trusted security forces that are acceptable to all Somalis is essential. It represents a major opportunity to build and consolidate the federal State and should be approached as such, not just as a military undertaking. The essential first step is a political agreement between the Federal Government and Federal member states, supported by Parliament and civil society, on a shared security architecture that embraces both army and police.

Such an agreement can become a basis for more coherent international support and a cornerstone for joint planning with the African Union (AU) on AMISOM's future and eventual drawdown. AMISOM is a model for a comprehensive approach to security, but it has reached its tenth anniversary and will not stay forever. The troop-contributing countries have their own parameters, and donors face many competing global demands. However, as was evident during the electoral process, for now AMISOM remains the backbone of security in Somalia. Its presence is essential to building the Somali security forces, and its precipitate drawdown could be disastrous.

For that reason, I urge the Council to focus on finding the funds to maintain AMISOM's presence and enable a conditions-based withdrawal. The objective must be a sufficient level of security in the coming years, including in the run-up to the elections in 2020. Over the next month, the AU and the United Nations will jointly review AMISOM's future. Along with the results of the strategic assessment mission, the review should help the Council decide on the way forward for AMISOM, including the use of assessed contributions. However, the results of the review are unlikely to be ready by 15 April, owing to delays in the establishment of the new Government.

Security is not the only priority. Advancing the constitutional process remains urgent. Constitutional development will require consensus-building, dialogue and consultations at various levels in order to address all issues related to federalism. Strengthening conflict-resolution capacities is another. It is vital to include all sectors of society, including women, young people, minorities and businesses, in the peaceful resolution of internal conflicts. The United Nations will work on that in coordination with key international partners such as the African Union, the European Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development.

Significant work is needed to improve the dismal human rights situation in Somalia. I am particularly concerned about attacks on journalists and the increase in sexual violence against internally displaced women and members of minority clans. Military operations and a worsening humanitarian situation will expose Somalis to violations of human rights and international humanitarian law. Improving the capacity to provide protection must be a priority. Full implementation of the human rights due diligence policy, including the implementation of mitigating measures, is essential.

In conclusion, Somalia faces many daunting difficulties after decades of violent conflict, but it has now been presented with a political opportunity. The Security Council enjoys a remarkable degree of consensus on Somalia. I hope that it can be used not only to address the immediate crisis facing millions of people but also to support Somalia's new leadership, President and Prime Minister in addressing the underlying issues so that we can prevent such a tragedy from ever happening again.

The President: I thank Mr. Keating for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Madeira.

Mr. Madeira: I am honoured to have this opportunity to address the Security Council on the situation in Somalia.

It has been 10 years this month since the first soldiers of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) landed in Mogadishu on 6 March 2007, under fire from Al-Shabaab's Kalashnikov guns and mortars. In order to mark that important event, show solidarity and congratulate the people of Somalia and President Farmajo on his outstanding election, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission — who has asked me to greet those in this Chamber on his behalf and present his excuses for being unable to join the Council today — felt it was important and appropriate that he begin his activities outside the African Union headquarters with a visit to Somalia, his very first to a member State of the African Union and only four days after he took office, on Tuesday 14 March. He wanted to be close to AMISOM's men and women in the field and the people of the great country of Somalia, to honour our heroes and celebrate 10 years of the sustained effort by AMISOM and the Somali National Army to restore peace and stability in Somalia and in the East African region as a whole.

The Chairperson also felt that it was important to go to Somalia in order to highlight the alarming humanitarian situation that has befallen the country, where 6.2 million people are on the brink of famine, and a catastrophe similar to that of 2011 is looming on the horizon. As in 2011, the African Union, through AMISOM, will once again continue to work hand in hand and in coordination with the Somali authorities and other partners to support our Somali sisters and brothers who are the victims of drought, and to do our best to save them from an impending calamity.

As we look back at where we were in 2007, we realize that we have come a long way. Overall, the situation in Somalia has greatly improved, thanks to the enormous efforts of AMISOM in its joint operations with the Somali national security forces and other partners. In terms of performance, Somalia has defied the odds. The past four years have witnessed intense political activity and reforms, facilitated by a security environment conducive to such action. The Federal Government has remained in place in Mogadishu, functioning and actively formulating policy frameworks, strengthening its institutions, improving its performance and enhancing its efficiency. Regional Governments have been established and are doing the best to perform and respond adequately to the enormous challenges faced by the people under their authority. Economic life is coming alive in many regions of the country, particularly Mogadishu. Political dialogue, reconciliation and State formation, a constitutional review and elections have all been taking place. With the support of AMISOM and the Somali National Army, in September 2012 and February 2017, Somalia succeeded in effecting exemplary peaceful transfers of power. Eighty per cent of the country's territory has now been recovered from Al-Shabaab.

However, a lot more must be done to bring Somalia to the point where it needs to be. The country's capacity to hold on sustainably to its liberated territories, restore its authority, ensure the safety and security of its communities and enable the Administration to perform its governing functions must be further strengthened. AMISOM is playing its part in the concerted effort to build the country's capacity and enhance the effectiveness of Somalia's security forces, especially the National Army, the police force, the intelligence service and other public institutions that are central to the provision of basic services to the people and to keeping them happy and confident.

Somalia is now turning a new page under a new leadership, committed to putting the people of Somalia first. That means better governance, including the delivery of services, accountability, fighting corruption and enhancing the capacity of Somalis themselves to take on, deter, degrade and contain Al-Shabaab terrorists. A firm foundation enabling the country's institutions to take over their constitutional responsibilities is being laid. We are happy that the views of the African Union and those of President Farmajo on how to do that are very similar.

We are satisfied with the current ongoing momentum in the build-up to the London conference on a comprehensive approach to security in Somalia and on streamlining, empowering and consolidating Somalia's governance institutions. However, it is important that we do not lose sight of the fact that the effective achievement of our common objectives with regard to Somalia implies establishing short-, medium- and long-term benchmarks that must be pursued and implemented in a coordinated, complementary and mutually reinforcing manner. Concentrating on the medium- to long-term objectives — without a joint, coordinated and complementary commitment to a concrete, mutually reinforcing and objectively feasible plan to address the immediate challenges to our common effort in the short term — has the potential to undermine and render the implementation of our medium- to long-term plans very difficult.

As the Government strives to contain Al-Shabaab and improve security in a coordinated and complementary manner, we must provide it with the means and requisite support enabling it to concomitantly establish its presence in and effectively govern the territories that it has liberated with our support, and that must happen while we pursue our medium- to long-term goals of building permanent and more reliable and effective State institutions. The fight against Al-Shabaab and the efforts to degrade it must continue, and providing adequate means and conditions for AMISOM and the Somali national security forces to do so more effectively and in acceptable conditions must be one of our common and immediate short-term objectives.

Containing Al-Shabaab today requires, inter alia, that we build barracks to house the Somali National Army soldiers who have already been certified and have been made aware of the United Nations human rights due diligence policy. It requires that they be screened, equipped, rehearsed and motivated, paid salaries and given command so that they can face the enemy more effectively. It requires that both AMISOM and the Somali National Army be given the support that they have requested to dislodge the enemy from its remaining strongholds in the Juba Valley and Somalia's north-eastern coastline. It equally requires that AMISOM be provided with a more predictable, less erratic and more dependable source of funding to perform its duties and achieve its mandate on time. That should include the assessed contribution.

We have a very clear timeline. We have to start drawing down in 2018. We do not have much time left. We need the means to make a significant difference by then. The Secretary-General has been on the ground in Somalia and has seen for himself what needs to be done. The African Union remains committed to fulfilling its part in our common struggle against violent extremism and terrorism and for the restoration of peace and security, which are essential ingredients for economic development and the improvement of the living conditions of the people of Africa and of the world at large.

The President: I thank Mr. Madeira for his briefing.

I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed Farmajo, President of the Federal Republic of Somalia.

President Farmajo: Before I start my statement, I would like to express my deepest sympathy and condolences to the British people and the British Government following the barbaric terrorist attack in London. We in Somalia are at the forefront of that war. We fully condemn terrorism and will continue to fight it in all its forms.

It is a great honour to address the Security Council on the important matter of Somali's progress and the remaining challenges we face. The Security Council, along with many partner nations of the United Nations, has played and will continue to play a vital role in our national progress alongside our people and Government, both bilaterally and multilaterally. At the outset, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Secretary-General and his delegation, including Mr. Stephen O'Brien, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, for visiting Somalia to witness and assess the current acute humanitarian challenges we face. I heartily welcome the statement by Mr. Michael Keating, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia, and agree that while there are immediate and long-term challenges to overcome, there is also much to be hopeful about as we make tangible and sustainable political progress.

Despite the progress Somalia is making, it is difficult to meet the challenges of drought and the humanitarian crises both in our country and in the region, but we must not simply give way to doom and gloom. We in Somalia strongly believe that socioeconomic and political gain must go hand in hand with good governance to achieve sustainable development for all our people.

As the Council knows, despite the enormous challenges and scepticism, the long and protracted elections have just been concluded peacefully and democratically. On 22 February, I appointed Hassan Ali Khayre as my Prime Minister, and the Federal Parliament endorsed him unanimously. Just two days ago, he in turn formed a competent Cabinet. I am optimistic that Parliament will once again support the new Cabinet so that we can get to work, starting with tackling the drought currently wreaking havoc in our nation. Somalia was one the first democratic countries in Africa, and on 8 March we completed our first successful national election in decades. That election saw the preceding President, Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, graciously accept the electoral outcome that led to my becoming President, and his speech to all delegates strongly encouraged all Somalis and other stakeholders to work with and support the new Administration under the new President.

For the first time in history, we have an almost 30 per cent representation of women in our Parliament, a substantial improvement from 14 per cent in 2012. Furthermore, the number of young lawmakers has increased, and there is a healthy number of diaspora parliamentarians, which is an excellent indicator that our people living all over the world will have an even greater impact than they have already had through remittances in shaping the direction that Somalia takes going forward. The new Cabinet also reflects a greater proportion of women and youth, who are the bedrock of our society.

Among the many pressing priorities for my Administration, responding effectively to the current humanitarian crisis tops the agenda. Almost half of my people are facing acute food shortages, and about 15 per cent are facing famine. I am truly saddened by that situation, as the Somali people are proud, generous, hard-working and truly resilient. They would be the last people to ask for assistance if they could somehow find a way to survive and transcend their reality. Instead, however, men, women and children walk for miles and hours in search of food and water, and many have fled to urban centres looking for the support that our Government is desperately trying to provide with the assistance of the international community. Many people's livelihoods, especially those in the area of animal husbandry, have perished. We are therefore

left collectively to plan a better future together in the aftermath of this humanitarian crisis.

The Somali Government has already sounded the alarm internationally and nationally and is leading a drive to generate funds from the Somali diaspora, the business community and others sources that might provide the urgent lifesaving assistance that the millions of our people affected by drought need. A few weeks ago, I declared the current drought a national disaster, so as to unleash our institutions and enable them to act urgently. The Prime Minister chairs the national drought committee, which has successfully mobilized and organized Somalis in the country and in the diaspora to collect funds in support of their brothers and sisters affected by the devastating drought.

The response from the Somali people and the international community has been tremendous, and we are working with the humanitarian community and valuable partners to address the issue. We kindly ask all those who can to give further support to this effort. Their support and generosity will be noted not just by the Somali people but by history.

Given the regional nature of the drought, it is important that sustainable, region-wide and resilient early-warning and intervention strategies be created and, where they already exist, enhanced. We must ensure that we increase the resilience of communities and make a priority of developing sustainable solutions for environmentally induced disasters such as this drought. In that regard, we have now created a new Government Ministry that focuses exclusively on humanitarian response and disaster management. In our national development plan, we have an entire chapter dedicated to resilience and a long-term strategy to mitigate cyclical droughts. In the desperate fight to avert this and other droughts, it is crucial that neighbours share ideas and experience bilaterally and multilaterally through the United Nations and regional institutions such as the Intergovernmental Authority on Development. This is the only way that can we hope to mitigate the devastating damage caused by droughts in East Africa.

The humanitarian response to the drought is somewhat challenging in certain places because of the insecurity caused by the terrorist group Al-Shabaab. However, we are determined to defeat it. I can confidently say that Al-Shabaab, thanks to the courage and sacrifice of the troops of the Somali National Army and the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), has been substantially weakened. In the fight against Al-Shabaab and international terrorism, we are grateful for the continuous support of AMISOM troop-contributing countries, our valued international partners, including many members of the Security Council, and the Somali Security Service, which is growing in strengthen and ability every day.

While we are grateful for all the support from and sacrifices by AMISOM, we understand that the only way to protect our democracy and development against evil spoilers is to rebuild our national army, police and other security services. I can assure the Security Council today that that is our goal, and we will achieve it with the Council's continued support. We are working with our partners to develop a clear road map for the reduction of AMISOM forces, while we are also expanding both the quality and quantity of our security services. In that regard, I would like to ask the Security Council to work with us on a road map towards the full lifting of the arms embargo. The road map will be presented at the upcoming London conference in May.

Achieving sustainable peace requires more than physical security. We must invest in education, jobs and skills in order to overcome the many challenges Somalia faces. That critical component of development must accompany the physical security we seek, or it will be difficult to overcome the challenges of radicalization, illegal migration and other tragedies that waste talents and lives. Furthermore, we need to train and educate the future water, engineering, livestock, agriculture and technological champions who will design, produce and maintain the drought-resilience systems that are necessary for ensuring that today's misery is never again repeated. I am sure that all Council members will agree that that is a better investment of our money than repeatedly responding to cyclical humanitarian crises.

Our strategy for a sustainable economic recovery is detailed in the national development plan. We will present our top priorities at the London conference, but I can point to a few key ones today. First, we need to invest seriously in our vital infrastructure, starting with energy, water and major roads. Secondly, we need to revive key economic engines such agriculture, livestock and fisheries. Thirdly, we need to invest in new sectors, such as telecommunications and finance. Finally, none of the foregoing will be possible if we do not first undo our errors and normalize our relations with international financial institutions. Tangible

progress has already been made in that regard, but we hope for an accelerated process of debt relief and, subsequently, access to capital loans. A detailed plan covering those issues will be presented in London.

On the political front, we have major work ahead of us. A primary objective for us will be to deepen the federal architecture by strengthening the federal member states and finalizing the status of the capital, Mogadishu. Furthermore, we will finalize the review of our Constitution, which is the document that will bind the Somali people together. We have a large number of negotiations ahead, in such key areas as resource-sharing, the relationship between the Federal Government and the federal member states, security architecture and policy, and many other issues. We will approach them with an eye to reconciliation and social healing. Most importantly, we will work towards the implementation of a one-person, one-vote arrangement in 2020, anchored in a political party system. That is the only way to make our political system more transparent and truly democratic.

Despite the many challenges, none is insurmountable. The Somalis are resilient, patient and ready to do the heavy lifting for their own progress. However, we have a saying in Somalia that one finger cannot be the boss of your whole face. We therefore want to reiterate to the Security Council how much we value the effort of all our partners, and to emphasize that in this time of both our greatest need and greatest opportunity, we must cooperate in order to achieve our common goals and ensure that Somalia, the region and the rest of the world are safe, progressive and prosperous.

The President: I thank President Farmajo for his statement.

I shall now make a statement in my capacity as Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom.

I am grateful to President Farmajo for his first address to the Security Council, and to Mr. Keating and Mr. Madeira for their briefings.

Last week I was fortunate enough to visit Somalia at a time that the Secretary-General has described as both tragic and hopeful. Today President Farmajo had an opportunity to describe how the Federal Government plans to bring peace and stability to his country. I hope the President will take the clear message from this meeting that as long as he works for the benefit of Somalia, the Security Council will stand with him.

We meet at a moment when Somalia faces the daunting prospect of its third famine in 25 years. We cannot forget that the last time that Somalia was blighted by starvation in 2011, no fewer than 260,000 people died. Today more than 6 million Somalis need help. The crisis also risks undermining the hard-won political and security progress that has been made. The good news is that if we learn the lessons of 2011 and act promptly and decisively, the famine can still be prevented. Britain has contributed more than $135 million in emergency aid to Somalia this year. That United Kingdom aid will provide more than 1 million people with food, water and emergency health care. I urge all our partners to support the relief effort that is now under way. And I urge the Somali Government to deliver on the commitments it has made to improve access and remove logistical blockages, as part of its welcome focus on the issue.

In Mogadishu last week, I witnessed a military training session for the Somali National Army and the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) troops. A heavy responsibility rests on these brave soldiers to guarantee the security on which every other form of progress depends. This is a critical time for security in Somalia. We must work together to agree on a clear, long-term plan for international security support in Somalia. We hope to make progress on a security pact during the forthcoming London conference on Somalia. The most urgent requirement is for a political agreement between the Federal Government and its federal member states on the security architecture of the Somali security forces. Once that has been agreed on, the international community should outline its comprehensive and coordinated support to Somalia on security-sector reform. We also need to agree on the shape of a conditions-based transition away from AMISOM to the Somali security forces. I cannot commend highly enough the prowess and bravery of AMISOM soldiers and their Somali counterparts in the struggle against Al-Shabaab. They have made a real difference to Somalia and to the security of East Africa as a whole, and we are all conscious of their sacrifice. It is precisely because we must not allow their sacrifice to be in vain that we must ensure a successful transition.

The African Union is a central partner, and the forthcoming joint United Nations-African Union review will be crucial to setting the future direction of

that partnership. I hope that all members of the Council will be open-minded, particularly with regard to funding, so that Somalia's progress is not jeopardized by a hasty transition.

Security is one urgent aspect of the broader constitutional settlement that a stable, federal Somalia needs. The Federal Government and member states will also have to agree on how to share power and resources. Resolving those questions will be crucial to the country's long-term stability. I look forward to a one-person, one-vote election in four years' time. I also welcome the focus of President Farmajo on promoting economic recovery and creating jobs for a new generation of young and ambitious Somalis. For that to succeed, the Government will need to continue to make progress on important economic reforms, comply with the current International Monetary Fund programme and improve the business environment. Those steps will also be essential for Somalia to be able to make progress towards its aims of accessing multilateral finance and debt relief.

At this crucial time, Britain will join the United Nations and the Federal Government to host a conference on Somalia in London in May. The conference will assess the response to the humanitarian emergency, accelerate progress on security and adopt a new partnership agreement that sets the terms of the relationship between Somalia and the international community for the coming years. A peaceful and prosperous Somalia is the aim we all share, and let me say to President Farmajo that the Security Council will stand beside him as he strives to achieve that goal.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

I now give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden.

Ms. Wallström (Sweden): First of all, my thoughts are with the British people, and especially with the victims of the horrific attack at Westminster, the heart of British democracy. We are angered by this callous and cowardly attack. However, we are also confident that the legendary resilience and spirit of Londoners will shine through. There can be no surrender to fear. We stand united against the threat of terrorism in all its forms, wherever and by whomever it is committed.

Let me thank you, Mr. President, and the United Kingdom presidency for convening today's meeting, as we embark upon the next step towards a peaceful and prosperous Somalia. I want to congratulate the people of Somalia on their successful completion of parliamentary and presidential elections. I am encouraged by the positive results, especially the increased representation of young people and the fact that the number of women in Parliament has almost doubled. I am equally encouraged by the fact that women make up 23 per cent of the newly appointed Cabinet. That is important for the future.

There is now an opportunity to put renewed energy into the continued peace- and State-building process in Somalia. I would like to briefly highlight three aspects that I believe should be addressed in order to maintain a positive path, with continued support from the international community and the Council.

First, with the process of creating federal member states concluded, the focus should now shift towards clarifying the arrangements between them and the central Government. For that to be fruitful, the constructive relations already established must be further strengthened. The establishment of local governance and the delivery of basic social services to all Somalis must be given priority. Furthermore, the constitutional review should be resumed as soon as possible, as part of resolving outstanding political issues, with a view to being concluded before 2020. Secondly, preparations for the 2020 elections need to start at the earliest possible moment, and a clear road map towards one person, one vote must be developed, incorporating lessons learned from the newly concluded electoral process, as we have already heard.

One priority is making sure that ordinary Somalis benefit from our collective peacebuilding and development efforts. In order for those efforts to be successful, an improvement of the security situation in Somalia is still crucial. I welcome the efforts already made by the Somali Government and its partners in that regard. We should especially commend the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) for its vital work. It is critical that we ensure that it has the necessary support, including more predictable and sustainable funding. On that note, I welcome the African Union's plans to strengthen self-financing, not least in the area of peace and security. At the same time, continuing the discussion on access to assessed United Nations contributions is important.

We must also make sure that AMISOM's drawdown is consistent with a corresponding build-up and takeover by Somalia's own security forces. Strong United Nations leadership in Somalia, well-coordinated support and a comprehensive approach to security, as adopted by the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia, will be necessary. The high-level conference in London in May will hopefully allow us to identify a clear path to sustainable security-sector reform.

Lastly, I want to express my deep concern with regard to the severe situation caused by the drought in Somalia and the region. It is devastating that in 2017 people all over the world are still dying of starvation. The international community, including Sweden, is responding, and there seems to be a strong and united determination to prevent a repeat of the catastrophic famine that took place only six years ago. However, the worst of the drought has likely not yet been reached, and it is crucial that we continue to scale up both funding and delivery. The strong leadership taken by the new Government in addressing the issue will help our joint effort. The regional challenges of the drought, which are exacerbated by refugee flows and ongoing conflict, must also be addressed. I encourage Somalia's neighbours and other countries in the region to further strengthen cross-border and regional cooperation in order to address those complex and interlinked challenges comprehensively.

In conclusion, maintaining a positive trajectory will require hard work by the Somali Government, and we wish the President of Somalia all the best. It will also require dedicated and long-term support from the international community. Sweden remains committed to continuing its strong partnership with Somalia, with the goal of ensuring sustainable peace and development for all Somalis.

Ms. Zemene (Ethiopia): We were indeed shocked by the Westminster terrorist attack in London yesterday, and we would like to offer our condolences to the families of the victims. We also join others in condemning that heinous attack in the strongest terms and expressing our solidarity with the people and the Government of the United Kingdom.

Turning to the business of the Council today, we would like to thank the United Kingdom presidency for organizing this meeting on Somalia. We are very pleased to see you, Mr. President, presiding over this meeting only a few days after your important visit to our region, including Somalia. We were also very happy to hear from His Excellency President Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed Farmajo. We would all like to thank him for his important remarks outlining his Government's vision for a peaceful and stable Somalia. And we are grateful to Mr. Keating and Ambassador Madeira for their respective briefings.

It was two weeks ago that Secretary-General António Guterres undertook his first field visit to show solidarity with the Somali people, who are facing a dire humanitarian situation. His appeal to the international community to scale up assistance to Somalia was quite crucial and very much appreciated. It is in that same spirit that the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Mr. Moussa Faki, visited Mogadishu over the past weekend, thereby making Somalia the first country to be visited by the new leader of the African Union Commission. The symbolism is remarkable.

We do indeed need to act swiftly if we are to avert a humanitarian catastrophe in Somalia. We commend President Farmajo, who demonstrated his political leadership immediately after taking office by convening a high-level conference in Mogadishu to mobilize assistance for the humanitarian response. The severe drought is threatening the lives of millions of people in Somalia and the wider region. It is in that context that we would like to reiterate the call made by the Council of Ministers of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), which met last week in Addis Ababa, for enhanced support from the international community to complement efforts at the national and regional levels. For our part, we are supporting the United Nations response to the drought situation by allowing UNICEF to purchase supplies from our local markets and by facilitating easy-access corridors for the humanitarian supplies to reach Somalia.

Somalia is facing this humanitarian challenge at a time when it has made significant gains on the political and security fronts. That is why we should do everything possible not to allow the drought situation to undermine those gains. That is also why we should act fast and act now. There is no better indication of the progress in Somalia than the recent election, which, by all measures, and considering the security challenges the country is facing, was the most competitive and participatory that the country has had in a very long time. It is indeed a significant achievement for Somalia and its nascent institutions. The international community, which has invested so much in supporting

peace and stability in Somalia, should also draw a measure of satisfaction from that achievement.

It should be stressed that the country has also come a long way in restoring peace and stability in much of its territory. Somalia unquestionably continues to face formidable challenges in the security area, but that should in no way cloud the tangible progress that has been made. Yes, Al-Shabaab cannot yet be dismissed as a mere nuisance, and the series of attacks carried out by that terrorist group recently in Mogadishu and other parts of Somalia are clear indications that it is still capable of causing great damage in terms of the loss of human life and the destruction of property. But one thing is for sure — Al-Shabaab has been significantly weakened, and it no longer controls large swathes of Somali territory.

We welcome the strong commitment made by President Farmajo to defeat Al-Shabaab by working closely with the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). Provided that there is adequate international support, the total elimination of Al-Shabaab is in fact no longer a remote possibility. AMISOM is marking its tenth anniversary in Somalia this year, and its contribution to laying a foundation for enhanced peace and security in the country has been remarkable. However, AMISOM was never intended to be more than a stopgap measure. Its mission is to provide security support to Somalia in the short term until the security forces of the country are fully ready to take over full responsibility. That cannot be too far away now, and the effort to achieve that goal should be taken up more seriously than ever.

In the meantime and in tandem, ways and means have to be found on the part of the United Nations and the international community to make sure that the support provided to AMISOM is predictable and dependable, so that it can finish the job and pave the way for its gradual drawdown and exit. We very much hope that the Secretary-General will come up with concrete proposals in that regard. Of course, as has already been indicated, the long-term and sustainable solution to the issue is to build the capacity of the Somali National Army, and much remains to be done in that area, including the coordination of international efforts within the context of full country ownership.

Despite its recent positive trajectory, there is no doubt that Somalia continues to faces enormous challenges and difficulties. The country is building its institutions, as well as regional and local administrative structures, more or less from scratch. The recent election has shown us that what we are seeing in Somalia today is more than just a light at the end of the tunnel. There is hope for the country's future. Now is the time, therefore, for scaling up support for Somalia's post-conflict reconstruction and development endeavours. For that reason, the pledges that were made at the Brussels and Istanbul conferences on Somalia should be honoured.

Finally, we welcome the announcement that you made, Sir, together with President Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed Farmajo in Somalia, about the holding of the London conference on Somalia in May. We look forward to participating and hope it will contribute to supporting the long-term stability and reconstruction of Somalia. We in the region will continue to support our sisterly country in overcoming its many challenges. In that context, a special summit of IGAD will be held in Nairobi on Saturday to find a sustainable and durable solution to the plight of Somali refugees. I would like to conclude by expressing the hope that this regional effort will be complemented by support from the international community, including the United Nations.

Mr. Prystaiko (Ukraine): Let me begin by expressing Ukraine's deep and sincere condolences to the families of the victims of yesterday's act of terror. Our prayers go to all Londoners, and we believe that we all have to remain united and dig deep to get to the bottom of the attack and those responsible for it.

I would like to thank you, Sir, for presiding over today's important meeting personally. We appreciate the United Kingdom's leadership in the Council on the issue of Somalia, including by steering the Council's field mission to Mogadishu in May 2016. I am also grateful to the briefers for their insightful updates. And I would like to express our full support for the President of Somalia and his commitment to bringing sustainable peace and prosperity to his country.

Like others, we are heartened to see the significant progress that has been made since 2012 on the political and security fronts in Somalia. The most substantial strides have been in the electoral area. It was a long-distance election marathon with many hurdles along the way. Yet at the finish line we witnessed the most peaceful and inclusive electoral process that Somalia has had in the past several decades. That indicates a clear success. It is truly remarkable that the representation of women

in political life has increased by 70 per cent since the previous elections. I am confident that that will have a positive impact not only on the further political empowerment of women, but also on the overall success of peacebuilding endeavours in Somalia.

We understand that elections alone cannot end the instability in the country. Yet they represent a historic milestone on the road to peace and reconciliation for the nation, achieved against a backdrop of continued security challenges, especially terrorist threats. That positive electoral experience should facilitate preparations for the next step — ensuring universal suffrage in Somalia. Further international assistance, in particular through the commendable efforts of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia, the African Union, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, the European Union, the League of Arab States, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), remains instrumental.

As the famous eighteenth-century English writer Samuel Johnson once quipped, "the future is purchased by the present". With that in mind, I would like to single out three specific challenges that Somalia is facing today.

First, the dire humanitarian situation unfortunately continues to deteriorate with every passing day. According to recent data from the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and UNICEF, malnutrition and drought-related diseases are on the rise, and cholera has spread to 11 of the country's 18 regions. Drought- and conflict-related displacement also continues to increase. Half of the population is in need of food and humanitarian assistance. Approximately 1.4 million children are at risk of dying imminently from severe malnutrition as famine looms in Somalia and neighbouring countries. Those numbers are more than abstract statistics. They represent the lives of people who must be saved, including women and children. The Council should act decisively and in a unified manner. We should realize that under such circumstances time is not on our side. In that light, we commend the efforts of the Secretary-General and fully support his personal involvement aimed at preventing the repetition of the situation we saw in Somalia in 2011, when hundreds of thousands of people perished.

Now is the time for joint action and for our unified support and assistance to the Government and the people of Somalia. It would be totally unacceptable for the United Nations, or the international community in general, to allow famine to devastate the country once again. We welcome all international efforts aimed at preventing such a scenario. In that context, we commend the United Kingdom's role in those efforts and its readiness to seek new platforms and ways to help Somalia, including the London conference on Somalia to be held in May.

Secondly, with regard to security and counter-terrorism, although the security situation continues to improve, we realize that the threat posed by Al-Shabaab persists. We strongly condemn its terrorist activities, particularly attacks and violence against civilians, the recruitment and use of children, and abductions of and attacks on humanitarian workers. We pay tribute to AMISOM and Somalia's security forces for their efforts to combat that threat. In the context of AMISOM's eventual exit, we encourage the Government of Somalia to accelerate its security-sector reform, in close cooperation with the United Nations presence and international partners. The readiness of local forces for a gradual takeover of security responsibilities from AMISOM, including in the area of the protection of civilians, should remain our top priority. We know very well from our own experience back home that only well-trained and well-equipped national forces can effectively ensure lasting peace and stability in the face of the threat posed by terrorism.

Thirdly, on the political front, besides the importance of ensuring universal suffrage, which I have already mentioned, there can be no doubt that conducting the constitutional review and achieving further agreement on the country's federal administrative system are key tasks for the new Government. Transparency and inclusiveness will play a decisive role in determining its success in that regard and how it will be judged by the international community and, most important, by the Somali people.

Finally, I would like to touch briefly on another factor that must not be overlooked if we are to support Somalia on the path to sustainable peace in a comprehensive and holistic manner. Last week we had reports of the first hijacking of a commercial vessel by pirates since 2012. We hope that incident does not portend a return to the levels of piracy threats that we saw in the Gulf of Aden several years ago. Preventing

and countering piracy and armed robbery at sea should continue to be a priority for the Government of Somalia and the international community. Ukraine will stand in solidarity with Somalia as it counters that and other challenges and embraces new, historic opportunities.

Mr. Baba Cissé (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): First, on behalf of Senegal, I would like to firmly condemn the attack that occurred in London yesterday and express the sincere condolences of the Government of Senegal to you, Mr. President, and to the Government of the United Kingdom and to the families of the victims.

I would also like to thank President Farmajo for his important statement, as well as Mr. Michael Keating, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia, and Mr. Francisco Caetano Jose Madeira, Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia and Head of the African Union Mission in Somalia for their briefings.

The delegation of Senegal also wishes to thank the United Kingdom presidency for having taken the initiative of convening this debate on Somalia, where successful presidential elections in February resulted in the election of Mr. Farmajo as new President of the Republic.

That election, combined with the adoption of a new constitution and a transparent, democratic and inclusive electoral code, is undoubtedly a great step forward. On behalf of the Government of Senegal, I once again convey our warm congratulations to the Federal Government of Somalia for the successful political elections, and I encourage regional and international actors to maintain their coordinated and cohesive support so as to consolidate the country's progress.

Our debate is certainly timely, given the current state of affairs, which reflects the seriousness of the other challenges facing Somalia — the most recent being the severe drought, which, according to humanitarian agencies, puts some 3 million people at risk of starvation. That risk is all the more worrying, as the country is still quite exposed to terrorists. Al-Shabaab continues to be a threat as it still occupies parts of the country and engages in harmful actions, such as carrying out asymmetrical attacks, thus greatly undermining the country's security.

I also pay tribute to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and the Somali defence and security forces for their ongoing and outstanding work alongside the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia in difficult and often dangerous conditions in their efforts to support this brotherly country in establishing the rule of law.

However, despite the significant progress that the successful holding of presidential elections represents and the progress made in the fight against terrorism, the security and humanitarian challenges remain a source of concern in Somalia, owing to the residual capacities of the Al-Shabaab group, but also to the growing foothold of the Islamic State in the region.

The increase in violence against civilians attributed to Al-Shabaab is compounded by the use of children in clashes, the attacks on humanitarian workers, the embezzlement of aid and hindrances to its delivery, all of which are reprehensible practices that we all strongly condemn, whoever the perpetrators.

In order to better address those challenges, my delegation believes that substantial reform of the security sector is necessary and even urgent. In addition, we encourage Member States to support AMISOM by providing the necessary assistance to the African Union and troop-contributing countries by paying for troops, training, technical assistance and ammunition, consistent with the exemption to the arms embargo imposed on Somalia, as well as by making financial contributions outside of the United Nations trust fund in support of AMISOM.

Confident of the efficiency of regional processes, we also remain convinced that the full cooperation of regional States, particularly Intergovernmental Authority on Development member States, through the regional frameworks and mechanisms established for that purpose, can promote a coordinated, and therefore sustainable, response to the problem of Al-Shabaab and other terrorist groups that threaten the region.

With regard to the humanitarian situation, according to statistics cited here by many speakers, including even the President of Somalia, some 6.2 million people in Somalia need humanitarian aid and protection, of which 2.9 million are directly at risk of starvation. We make an impassioned plea for international solidarity to help Somalia cope with that alarming situation. The newly elected Somali authorities must continue to focus on the fight against corruption in many sectors and the

improvement of human rights in Somalia, particularly those of women and children. Senegal condemns all violations of human rights and international humanitarian law, irrespective of the perpetrators.

In conclusion, my country calls on the international community to continue to support the Somali Federal Government in all of its efforts to advance the political process, eradicate the Al-Shabaab threat, improve the humanitarian situation and promote peacebuilding and sustainable development.

Mr. Amendola (Italy): First of all, as Prime Minister Gentiloni expressed to British Prime Minister May, I would like to reiterate our deep condolences to the British people and its Government over yesterday's terrorist attacks. We reaffirm our commitment to remaining united in our fight against terrorism.

At the outset, allow me to greet President Farmajo and express Italy's congratulations on his election and on the early appointment of the Prime Minister and the new Government, as well as on the strong representation of women within the new Government. We assure him of our strong commitment to supporting the Somali leadership in its efforts to stabilize the country. We are convinced that Somali ownership is the key to that process.

We have always believed in that principle; we reaffirmed that position during the recent election, and we will continue to do so as we further strengthen our bilateral relations and shore up our contribution for building the stable and prosperous Somalia that its President invoked during his statement.

Somali ownership brings me to the first point: institutional framework and security architecture. We are actively involved — along with Somalia, the United Nations, the African Union, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, the European Union and other relevant partners — in supporting the empowerment of Somali institutions. To that end, it is instrumental that Somali national and regional authorities work together to consolidate a united Federal Somalia.

As far as security is concerned, the exit strategy for the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) must be gradual in order to enable the entry of the Somali security forces. Besides supporting Somali ownership in the security field through bilateral training for the Somali police and leading the European Union training mission in Somalia with a command of more than half of its soldiers, we continue to encourage the efforts of the United Nations and the African Union, as expressed before, aimed at laying the groundwork for the AMISOM transition.

I turn now to the stabilization of the country. The presence today of President Farmajo and Minister Omer is the best evidence of what has been achieved over the past year. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General used the words "tragedy" and "hope", but Somalia could be and is a success story. After instability and unrest, it is finally heading towards peace. But we should not lose sight of the multifaceted challenges posed by terrorists. Security is not the only concern. The residual capability of Al-Shabaab and the appearance of Da'esh still constitute threats that affect the daily lives of the Somali people. The United Nations and all partners of Somalia can do more to tackle the root causes of radicalization, namely, poverty, the lack of education and the lack of job opportunities.

We hope that the ongoing review of the United Nations presence in the country will carefully assess that issue. We call on international financial institutions to do their part and, jointly with the donor community, to support the Somali Government in improving the business climate.

Finally, with regard to the humanitarian crisis, we are extremely concerned, like other speakers before us, about the severe impact of the drought and the risk of famine. It is a situation that requires immediate action, as the Secretary-General pointed out following his recent visit. We are encouraged by the outcome of the high-level round table convened by President Farmajo in Mogadishu on 28 February and by the prompt measures he has taken to facilitate the delivery of much-needed humanitarian aid. We look forward to further results during the forthcoming Intergovernmental Authority on Development conference on Somali refugees to be held on 25 March.

I am pleased to be able to share with the Council that in answer to its appeal ahead of the London conference, our Foreign Minister, Mr. Alfano, personally informed Secretary-General Guterres a few days ago of an additional humanitarian-aid contribution by Italy, which will provide direct support to the Somali people and the Government as they face this critical humanitarian situation.

I would like to conclude by expressing our solidarity with the people and the Government of Somalia following the death of 40 Somali refugees on a boat off the Yemeni coast. Our thoughts and condolences go to the families of the victims. We follow the plight of Somali refugees with great concern. As that most recent tragic event has sadly reminded us, insecurity and humanitarian challenges are interlinked. It is imperative that we find a common solution to tackling the root causes that have led to the problem of migration in Somalia and elsewhere.

Mr. Ali (Kazakhstan): Kazakhstan would like to welcome you, Mr. President, and to join the other members of the Council in condemning the recent terrorist attack outside the Houses of Parliament in London. We express our condolences to the families of the victims and wish the injured a speedy recovery.

We congratulate President Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed Farmajo on his election as Head of State and hope that under his wise stewardship the people of Somalia can achieve tangible results in restoring their country. We express our deep appreciation to the leadership of the Federal Republic of Somalia, Special Representative Keating and the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia, Mr. Madeira, for their comprehensive and thought-provoking updates. We also commend the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) and the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) for their commitment to bringing peace and security to the country.

Kazakhstan welcomes the significant political and electoral progress that has been made in Somalia, as well as the improvements in the security situation. The formation of a new Cabinet is an important practical step in tackling the challenges that the country faces. Preliminary measures aimed at building stable State institutions and interministerial coordination should be taken as soon as possible in order to enact legislation and develop national strategies. That will provide a foundation for the rule of law, good governance and security-sector reform. It is essential that the resources be found to pay the salaries of the army regularly with the assistance of the United Nations system, together with that of regional and international organizations and financial institutions. We are looking forward to the upcoming London conference on Somalia, which will prepare a road map for a future federal security structure designed to consolidate the current efforts.

The international community should support Somalia in its efforts to reach the political goal of achieving one-person, one-vote universal elections in 2020. To that end, technical guidance from the United Nations Department of Political Affairs, UNSOM and the Inter-Parliamentary Union will be required in order to establish regional and local electoral structures. The historic momentum towards inclusive democracy, as seen in the increased representation of women in the upper and lower houses of Parliament, must continue. The electoral achievement across the country would not have occurred without the heroic efforts of UNSOM, the African Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, and especially the bravery of AMISOM in combating the destructive acts of Al-Shabaab. The training and financial and technical support that AMISOM needs to enable it to succeed in the current asymmetrical conflicts it is facing must therefore be intensified. Kazakhstan is very concerned about the recent Al-Shabaab attacks and calls for closer collaboration between the Government, AMISOM, UNSOM, the United Nations system and other international partners.

As Chair of the Security Council's Committee established pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009), concerning Somalia and Eritrea, Kazakhstan is striving to promote peace and security in the Horn of Africa. We underline the importance of ensuring sufficient financial resources for implementing Somalia's first national development plan. It is evident that the United Nations, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and regional financial institutions should reinforce the Government's commitment to pursuing the path of sustainable development. Such goals can be achieved, inter alia, by introducing macroeconomic measures, including creating jobs for young people and building the capacity needed to establish and maintain the new and stable public institutions that the country is striving for. Only such national approaches, combined with a comprehensive and holistic regional strategy that addresses the issues of security and development, can ensure lasting peace and stability for the country and the wider subregion.

Like others, we are concerned about the humanitarian situation in Somalia caused by the ongoing drought. Our inability to provide assistance will undermine the pursuit of key State-building and peacebuilding initiatives. While we appreciate the efforts of several

countries to host Somali refugees, only a major concerted effort by the international community can mitigate the massive problem of refugees that we are witnessing today. The prevailing tensions and armed conflicts have resulted in death, violence and human rights abuses, especially among children, women and other vulnerable groups. Such acts of violence call for intensifying the mobilization of protection services and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration measures by well-trained experts assigned to UNSOM. Counter-terrorism efforts in Somalia must take into account the rights, special needs and protection of the sectors of the civilian population that are affected by the armed conflict.

Despite the situation, Kazakhstan has hope and optimism for Somalia with respect to its sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence, and we would like to express our full support to the newly elected President and his new Government in their vision for Somalia.

Mr. Liu Jieyi (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China strongly condemns the terrorist attack that took place in London yesterday and would like to offer its condolences to the bereaved families of the innocent victims and our sympathy to the injured. Terrorism is the common enemy of the international community. China is resolutely opposed to all forms of terrorism and is ready to step up its cooperation with the international community in our joint response to terrorist threats and challenges, with the goal of maintaining world peace and security.

China was pleased to welcome Mr. Boris Johnson, Foreign Secretary of the United Kingdom, as he presided over today's meeting. We also welcome President Farmajo of Somalia, who joined us by video link, and to acknowledge the presence of Foreign Minister Omar of Somalia at today's meeting. China listened attentively to the statements made by President Farmajo; Mr. Keating, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia; an Mr. Madeira, Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia.

Somalia is entering a crucial stage of national reconstruction. China congratulates President Farmajo on his election and welcomes his appointment of Mr. Hassan Ali Khayre as Prime Minister. We also commend his commitment to advancing the political process of stabilizing the country and pressing ahead with economic reconstruction. We are confident that the Government and the people of Somalia will contininue to make new progress in the reconstruction of their country.

The security and humanitarian situation in Somalia remains precarious, given rampant terrorist activities and the recent grip of a crippling famine. Somalia still has a long way to go in its quest for peace and stability. That is why there is a need for unwavering support and assistance from the international community. China welcomes the Security Council's unanimous adoption this morning of resolution 2346 (2017), on the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia, which will enable it to carry out the assessment of the post-election situation in Somalia and provide targeted support, based on the Government of Somalia's needs, to enable it to advance its peace process and national reconstruction. Secretary-General Guterres and the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Mr. Faki, both visited Somalia this month in a testament to the solidarity of the African Union and the United Nations with Somalia as it works to rebuild itself in the new context. China highly commends those efforts.

This year marks the tenth anniversary of the deployment of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). Over the past decade, AMISOM and countries in the region have assisted the Government of Somalia in actively combating terrorism. The United Nations has provided robust logistics support to AMISOM and has diligently coordinated the international assistance directed to Somalia. Thanks to those efforts, the situation in Somalia has gradually made a turn for the better. That is also an illustration of the positive momentum towards stability and development across the African continent driven by a commitment to unity, self-reliance, peace and development.

Today some parts of Africa are still facing daunting challenges characterized by continued local conflicts, a lack of development capacity and a precarious humanitarian situation. The United Nations has cooperated well with the African Union and other countries of the region on Somalia, providing useful reference points for the Security Council in tackling other hot-spot issues in Africa. China supports Africa in in efforts to address African issues in African ways and is supportive of the leading role played by the AU and other regional and subregional organizations in seeking political solutions to African hotspot issues, enhancing

coordination among various parties and building synergies. All the parties should decide on priorities, press the conflicting parties to settle their differences through dialogue and consultation, identify the nature and root causes of given problems, build mutual trust, facilitate reconciliation and pursue lasting solutions.

The international community should nurture a vision of common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security, support capacity-building in the African Standby Force and the African Union Rapid Reaction Force, and generally improve Africa's collective security capabilities. It is important to take a holistic approach to peace and development, emphasize conflict prevention, draw up clear-cut peacekeeping and peacebuilding targets, and boost Africa's development capabilities so as to promote stability and development in Africa.

The Chinese Government attaches great importance to its cooperation with Africa. During the Johannesburg summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, held in December 2015, China's President Xi Jinping and African leaders agreed to upgrade China-Africa relations to a comprehensive, strategic and cooperative partnership. Ten cooperation initiatives for the next three years were launched at the summit, focusing on industrialization, agricultural modernization, infrastructure, finance, green development, trade and investment facilitation, poverty reduction, public health, people-to-people exchanges and peace and security. These outcomes are being implemented in a swift and comprehensive manner.

So far, almost 50 per cent of China's pledged $60 billion has materialized or is in the pipeline. China will continue to act on the principles put forward by President Xi — those of sincerity, practical results, affinity and good faith — and uphold the value of friendship, justice and shared interests. We will ensure good progress in delivering on those initiatives and assist African countries in expediting industrialization and agricultural modernization. We will remain actively engaged in promoting the cause of peace and security in Africa and will further contribute to peace, stability and development in Africa.

Mr. Bermúdez (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): Uruguay welcomed the presence of the United Kingdom Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, His Excellency Mr. Boris Johnson, in presiding over our work, and we are grateful to him for organizing today's briefing on the situation in Somalia. As I said yesterday, my Government once again wishes to express its solidarity in connection with the shocking attack that occurred yesterday in the city of London.

I welcome the presence through video-teleconferencing of His Excellency President Farmajo of the Federal Republic of Somalia, and would also like to thank Mr. Michael Keating, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM), and the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia and head of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), Mr. Francisco Caetano José Madeira, for their briefings.

Uruguay welcomed the establishment of the new Federal Government of Somalia on 8 February following the election of its new President. At the start of this new phase, it is important to decide how the Security Council and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia can best support Somalia on issues relating to State-building, including the revision of the Constitution and the completion of the establishment of the Federal State. That is why Uruguay supported the extension of the UNSOM mandate this morning, in order to give the Council sufficient time to develop an effective mandate that benefits the people of Somalia.

This is a decisive and historic moment on the path towards the consolidation of a democratic, inclusive, stable State with full powers. Somalia has embarked upon preparations for general elections in 2020 based on the principle of one person, one vote. Uruguay acknowledges the efforts made to achieve the 30 per cent threshold of parliamentary seats set aside for women, even though that goal was not reached in this particular instance. However, the result of the elections did show the transformation in the political representation and participation of women in Somalia and, given that important precedent, efforts should be stepped up to achieve that goal in 2020.

Uruguay strongly condemns the continuing threat posed by the terrorist group Al-Shabaab, which is the main threat to peace and security in Somalia. Security-sector reform, and in particular the rapid and effective development of the Somali National Army, is vital if the Government security forces, including police, are to be able to assume a greater responsibility for the

maintenance of peace and security and the protection of Somali citizens.

For Uruguay, it is urgent that the international community respond to the worsening humanitarian crisis and famine in Somalia. Unless those problems are addressed, there may be grave consequences that could undermine the recent political achievements. Uruguay would especially like to underscore the need to protect civilian populations, particularly children, women and the elderly, and we encourage the Federal Government of Somalia to broker agreements and achieve stability, especially in areas where access to supplies and humanitarian assistance is essential.

Uruguay reiterates that UNSOM and the international community should work in an increasingly close and coordinated manner with regional administrations and the Federal Government to prioritize capacity-building and institution-building at the regional level, strengthen regional administrations and gradually create the basic conditions needed for governance, security and the provision of basic services for local populations.

Uruguay is very concerned about the recorded increase in human rights violations. Without prejudice to the important commitments that the Somali authorities have made in recent years regarding the protection of children, the detention of children for alleged links to Al-Shabaab remains a matter of concern. Uruguay therefore urges the Government of Somalia to treat children as victims first and foremost, and to ensure that the Government's guiding principles should be the best interests of the child and international standards of protection.

Mr. Aboulatta (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would first like to strongly condemn the terrorist attack in the city of London yesterday. I would also like to express our sincere condolences to the Government of the United Kingdom and the families of the victims.

We are grateful to the delegation of the United Kingdom for holding today's important meeting enabling us to examine the recent developments in the brotherly country of Somalia. We thank Mr. Keating and Mr. Madeira for their valuable briefings. I would also like to congratulate President Farmajo of Somalia on his election last month and to commend Somalia for respecting the choice of the people and effecting a peaceful and democratic transition of power.

It goes without saying that the election of Mr. Farmajo, who had broad popular support and has appointed a new Government, is a positive development that will, we hope, help to continue the development of the political process in Somalia and respond to the aspirations of the Somali people with regard to State institution-building, the elimination of terrorism and the promotion of socioeconomic development. In that regard, we look forward to the report being drafted by the Secretariat in accordance with resolution 2275 (2016) concerning the future presence of the United Nations in Somalia.

My delegation would like to reiterate how important it is for the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) to fully reflect developments on the ground so that it can provide the Somali Government with the appropriate support in confronting the challenges that the country is facing. In doing so, it should focus on the concept of establishing lasting peace, especially in the areas of national reconciliation, the constitutional review, the development of Somali armed forces that are strong and united, and the establishment of effective institutions that can provide basic services and ensure public order and security in liberated areas.

Terrorism still represents a serious threat to the progress achieved in Somalia in the recent past. That threat is not limited to Somalia; it has spread to other States in the region and beyond. We must promote regional and international efforts to defeat Al-Shabaab and other terrorist organizations. In that context, I would like to commend the sacrifices made by the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and the Somali armed forces. It is a priority for the Somali stakeholders to agree on a plan so as to achieve the goal of building a united Somali army, given the progressive drawdown of AMISOM planned for 2018 before it withdraws fully and its protection and security functions are completely transferred to the Somali State.

We express our solidarity with the Government and the people of Somalia with regard to the effects of the humanitarian crisis caused by the drought and the scarcity of rain. My delegation calls for increased regional and international efforts to provide assistance to those who need it. The consequences of the crisis are numerous and extremely dangerous, particularly for the humanitarian, political and security fronts, and can include problems such as increased migration, pressure on natural resources and ensuing conflict.

In addition, it is important to strengthen efforts to build capacity in Somalia in the area of early warning and prevention mechanisms to manage this type of crisis — which Somalia has suffered from repeatedly in the past — in order to prevent their recurrence and reduce their severity in future.

Lastly, I would like to renew our congratulations to the President, the Government and the people of Somalia on their successful elections, and to reiterate the full support of Egypt for that brotherly country in its efforts to build a stable, strong and prosperous State.

Ms. Sison (United States of America): As others have done before me, I want to express our heartfelt condolences to our close friends in the United Kingdom in connection with the terrorist attack yesterday in London. We pledge our full cooperation and support in responding to the attack and in bringing those responsible to justice.

I thank the President of the Council for the United Kingdom's leadership on Somalia. I am also grateful to Special Representative Keating and Special Representative Madeira for their briefings. We were honoured by President Farmajo's participation today, and look forward to working closely with him and his Cabinet.

There is a difficult job ahead, with formidable humanitarian and security challenges complicating the already daunting tasks of building State institutions and extending services to communities throughout Somalia. Let me assure President Farmajo and the people of Somalia of continued support from the United States.

An immediate challenge facing the people of Somalia is the worsening hunger crisis, of course. More than half of Somalia's population needs food, water and health services now and, as we have just heard today, only 32 per cent of the needed $825 million has been received. We must aggressively pursue all funding streams to meet these urgent needs if we hope to mitigate the possibility of another famine.

We urge the Somali federal and State authorities to do everything possible to remove bureaucratic impediments to the movement of humanitarian assistance and, with the support of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), to establish conditions conducive to the unhindered delivery of critical humanitarian supplies.

We are especially troubled by Al-Shabaab's increasing depravity as it intensifies its asymmetric attacks on civilians, security services and Government officials. We condemn Tuesday's car-bomb attack in Mogadishu's Hamar Weyne district, and we offer our condolences to the families of the victims. We urge AMISOM and the Somali security forces to be proactive in efforts to disrupt Al-Shabaab and to deter other terrorist organizations from gaining a foothold in Somalia.

The United States continues to engage with partners in working towards a suitable solution to the issue of AMISOM troop stipends. The United States provides substantial assistance, including equipment, to the militaries of many AMISOM troop-contributing countries. We encourage donors to contribute to the trust fund for AMISOM and the Somali National Army. We recognize that AMISOM cannot stay in Somalia forever and, in that regard, joint planning between the United Nations and the African Union to identify AMISOM's immediate needs has become increasingly important.

The upcoming joint United Nations-African Union review of AMISOM will be an opportunity to assess Somalia's comprehensive security needs and identify a way forward for AMISOM. Given the severity of the remaining security challenges in Somalia, we do not believe that it is appropriate at this time to transition to a United Nations peacekeeping mission. AMISOM should continue its principal mission — to reduce the threat of Al-Shabaab — while setting the conditions for a successful security transition. To that end, we encourage President Farmajo to work with the Somali regional presidents to reach agreement on a national architecture for the Somali National Army and security forces.

Somalia's international partners must carefully consider how best to provide coordinated support to Somalia's security sector. If we are frank, we must recognize that at times our efforts to train and equip the Somalia National Army have not translated directly into sustainable gains. Security assistance works well when donors coordinate closely behind a Somali-led process, and we have welcomed intensified donor coordination in recent months under the auspices of the "S6" mechanism.

Strong Somali leadership from Villa Somalia and Parliament is needed to begin the constitutional review

process that will formalize State formation and provide a legal foundation for Somali institutions. A spirit of reconciliation must undergird those efforts to ensure inclusiveness. It is crucial that the Somali Government also protect its citizenry and prevent the unlawful use and recruitment of child soldiers, sexual and gender-based violence, and the harassment of journalists by security forces.

We look forward to the London conference on Somalia as an opportunity for the Federal Government of Somalia and its international partners to reach agreement on the key issues that we have discussed here today. We hope that we will emerge from the conference with a shared path for the next phase of supporting Somalia's development, while addressing urgent humanitarian needs and building on the recent political and security successes that give us hope that a brighter future is possible for the Somali people.

Mr. Bessho (Japan): Before I speak on the issue of Somalia, I wish to express Japan's strong condemnation of the heinous terrorist attack that took place in London yesterday. On behalf of the Japanese Government, I express my sincere condolences to the families of the victims and our solidarity with the people of the United Kingdom. I wish a swift and full recovery to those who were injured.

I thank you, Mr. President, and the United Kingdom, for convening this timely briefing. I thank the briefers for their informative updates on the situation in Somalia. I also extend my deep appreciation to President Farmajo for his robust commitment to achieving peace and stability in the country.

Progress towards peace and stability in Somalia has been unfortunately fragile so far. Many challenges lie ahead, such as formulating a national security framework, building capacity for a representative Somali National Army, combating Al-Shabaab, agreeing on Federal-State resource- and revenue-sharing mechanisms and facilitating universal suffrage in 2020. Robust and sustained international assistance is critical, and Somali ownership is indispensable. Japan praises President Farmajo's active leadership in tackling these problems, and we promise to extend our full support for his endeavours.

The ongoing famine has threatened progress in State-building since the establishment of the Government in 2012. As Secretary-General António Guterres remarked during his visit to Somalia, tackling the risk of famine helps address the root causes of terrorism. Recognizing the very serious famine situation, Japan decided last week to extend an additional $26 million in emergency humanitarian assistance in response to the call by the Secretary-General, with $8.5 million directed to Somalia. This is in addition to Japan's assistance to Somalia in the amount of more than $22 million, decided in January 2017.

Improvement of the security situation in all corners of Somalia is the top priority. The role of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) is key in combating extremism, including Al-Shabaab. In order to avoid security gaps as AMISOM draws down next year, reinforcement of the capabilities of the Somali National Army must be conducted in an urgent and coordinated manner. While international donors have mobilized abundant resources over the years, there has been insufficient progress in building a representative and effective Somali National Army. Among the reasons are minimal integration of clan-based militias and a lack of coordination among donor communities.

We welcome the initiative by the United Kingdom to host the London conference on Somalia in May and commend President Farmajo and the Secretary-General for co-hosting the conference. That will be a perfect opportunity to address these problems and use limited international resources in a more coordinated manner. In particular, we hope the meeting will provide momentum for agreement among political leaders from each State on a national security framework, with a clear demarcation of the responsibilities between the Federal Government and states.

Improvements in the country's long-term security also depend on strengthening the capacity of the Somali police forces, including via salary support, institution-building and the provision of basic social services. Japan has contributed more than $400 million since 2007 in these areas and will continue to support Government efforts.

Macroeconomic improvements are critically important for achieving sustained peace and prosperity. Japan has long given priority to this area and welcomes the successful conclusion of the regular consultations by the International Monetary Fund last month. Sustained efforts in implementing measures to improve the fiscal framework, raise tax revenues and conduct structural reforms are key. Japan hopes that the political leaders demonstrate strong leadership and cooperation on

resource- and revenue-sharing mechanisms that will serve as a backbone of the Somali economy.

Finally, the first reported hijacking of a large commercial vessel off the coast of Somalia in five years has reminded us of the need for continued international counter-piracy efforts in the region. Japan will continue its warning and surveillance activities and escort operations while also supporting social services and economic development in the coastal regions, in close cooperation, naturally, with the Somali Government and the international community.

Mr. Llorentty Solíz (Bolivia) (*spoke in Spanish*): Before beginning our statement, we would like to add our own words to those of all our colleagues in condemning the heinous attack that took place yesterday in London and also repeat what President Evo Morales Ayma said in conveying our condolences to the Government and the people of the United Kingdom and to the families of those who lost their lives. We wish a speedy recovery to those who were injured. A few minutes ago, I found out that citizens of 11 countries were among the victims of yesterday's attack. That is a terrible reminder of the fact that terrorism is a global threat and that it is crucial for the international community to come together to put an end to it.

I would now like to begin by thanking President Farmajo of Somalia for participating in this meeting of the Security Council. I would also like to welcome His Excellency Mr. Boris Johnson, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom, as well as Mr. Michael Keating and Mr. Francisco Caetano José Madeira, whom I thank for their respective briefings.

Bolivia would like to emphasize the importance of the conclusion of the Somali electoral process and the election of President Farmajo on 8 February. We were pleased to see that the elections were much more peaceful and inclusive than has been the case in the past and that they have inspired a sense of hope in Somalia. We believe that they were the most representative and legitimate elections in the country's history and that they have made it possible, for the first time, for 26 per cent of parliamentary seats to be held by women.

We welcome the Secretary-General's position with respect to the importance of international cooperation in consolidating the recent political and security achievements. Moreover, we must also continue to ensure ongoing and long-term support for Somalia in order to promote the process of institution- and capacity-building based on initiatives aimed at good governance and efforts to improve the living conditions of its people. We underscore the importance of adhering to the political road map so that elections based on the principle of one-person-one-vote can be held no later than 2020.

Another issue of concern for us is the deterioration in the humanitarian situation, exacerbated by the drought that has extended beyond Puntland and Somaliland to areas in the south, such as Gedo and Juba Hoose. According to United Nations statistics, 5 million Somalis are facing acute food shortages, of whom more than 1.1 million are in emergency and crisis situations. According to the report (S/2017/21) of the Secretary-General, the continued lack of social safety nets and basic services increases the country's vulnerability and the potential for a broader crisis.

We call on the international community to respond without delay so as to prevent the situation from developing into a general famine in the country and the Horn of Africa, such as we saw in 2011 when, according to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 250,000 people died, of whom more than half were children under the age of five.

I would like to underscore what the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden said earlier, namely, that it seems unthinkable that in 2017 we are confronting the worst humanitarian crisis since the Second World War. But we also believe that it is crucial to recall that in 2017 we are encountering the greatest concentration of wealth among a few in the history of humankind. Eight individuals possess more than half of the world's wealth, and we naturally believe that that is closely linked not only to the planet's profound humanitarian crisis, but also to climate change, which is one of the causes — not the only one — of the tragic drought situation.

During the Secretary-General's visit to Somalia in March, he stressed to donors the need to provide an additional $825 million so as to be able to deliver critical humanitarian assistance over the next six months, and that, without that aid, the Somali people would face a tragedy that neither they nor any other people deserve. We therefore call on institutions like the World Bank, as part of their international responsibility, to remove all obstacles that might prevent such assistance from reaching Somalia.

Moreover, we commend the President of Djibouti, the Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, the President of the Republic of Kenya and the President of Somalia for their joint declaration, entitled the Mogadishu Declaration on regional cooperation on the current drought, which commits those States to combining efforts to establish security and stability in Somalia and neighbouring countries, thereby ensuring an effective response to the drought and enabling further progress in peacebuilding and State-building in Somalia.

Furthermore, Bolivia joins in the strong condemnation of the coordinated suicide attacks that killed dozens of Somali civilians and soldiers over the last several days, for which responsibility lies with the terrorist group Al-Shabaab. Similarly, we call attention to the plight of the Somali refugees who are returning to their country and facing situations of insecurity.

Finally, we acknowledge the important work of the United Nations Support Office in Somalia, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia and the African Union Mission in Somalia. We believe that their contribution is fundamental within a framework of respect for human rights and for the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Somalia.

Mr. Iliichev (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): First of all, we would like to express our condolences and sympathy to our United Kingdom colleagues, all the victims and the families of those who were killed in yesterday's terrorist attack in London. We strongly condemn that murderous attack, which once again confirms the need for coordinated action to effectively counter the global terrorist threat. We believe that that tragic event clearly demonstrates the timeliness and necessity of our initiatives to unify the efforts of the international community to combat terrorism.

The successful completion of the electoral process in Somalia and the election of the new President, Mr. Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed Farmajo, has been an important milestone in moving the country forward on the path of national reconciliation, re-establishing State authority and consolidating democratic institutions. A Prime Minister has been appointed, a new Government has been formed and the process of establishing a system of territorial administration has practically been completed.

However, we must note that a clan-based approach continues to prevail, unfortunately, in the domestic political life of the country. We need to gradually move away from that tendency and eliminate the fragmented nature of the Somali State at every level. We expect that the new Government will address the issues associated with internal political reforms, socioeconomic revitalization and development. We look forward to the positive outcome of the serious work currently under way on preparing a new version of the country's Constitution and on adopting a law on political parties. At the same time, the most important tasks for the Government continue to be the strengthening of the security sector, solidifying the foundations of federalism and promoting a lasting national and interethnic reconciliation in Somalia.

In our estimation, the security situation remains far from stable. We note the importance of continuing coordinated efforts by the international community to provide multidimensional assistance to Mogadishu so as to enhance the combat readiness of the Somali National Army and the African Union Mission in Somalia, which bear the primary burden for combating Al-Shabaab. We are concerned about the increase in destabilizing activity by that terrorist group beyond Somalia and the coordination of its actions with other terrorist groups in Africa. However, to date, achieving a decisive turning point in the fight against extremists has been impossible. In that regard, we call for a resolution of the issue of the delays in paying salaries to African peacekeepers and Somali soldiers and officers, who shed their blood to ensure Somalia's safety and security.

The arms and coal embargoes against Somalia are an important and effective instrument in preventing extremist and terrorist forces from resupplying and re-arming. It is those forces that prevent the normalization of the region. The policy of partially lifting the embargo on arms to benefit the security forces of Somalia has proven its effectiveness.

The seriously deteriorating humanitarian situation in several parts of Somalia demands close attention and an appropriate international response. It was caused primarily by a combination of the catastrophic consequences of the drought and the persistent internal instability. Hundreds of thousands of people in the country are on the verge of starvation, and forecasts for the near future are far from encouraging. The international community must provide humanitarian assistance to ensure that the population is provided

with drinking water, food and medicine. Russia is actively taking part in developing coordinated steps aimed at resolving the crisis, as well as in providing multidimensional assistance to the authorities in Mogadishu. We will continue training Somali civilian experts in Russia, the funding for which will be provided by the Russian federal budget.

Our country has regularly provided humanitarian assistance to the Federal Government of Somalia and Somali refugees in neighbouring countries through targeted contributions to the relevant funds of the United Nations system. Since 2011, our overall share in providing assistance has exceeded $16 million, including $2 million for Kenya, which has hosted approximately 1 million Somali refugees. We intend to continue to provide similar humanitarian assistance to Somalia.

Mr. Delattre (France) (*spoke in French*): I thank the various briefers for their presentations and would like to pay special tribute to the British Foreign Minister, who took the initiative to convene today's important meeting and travelled to New York to preside over it. I would also particularly like to thank the President of the Federal Republic of Somalia for his statement via video link.

Once again, on behalf of the Government of France, I would like to express our strongest condemnation of yesterday's terrorist attack in London and convey our deepest sympathy to and full solidarity with the United Kingdom.

I should like to make three points. First, with regard to the political and humanitarian situation in Somalia, the electoral process has been satisfactorily concluded. France welcomes the uncontested election of President Farmajo, which sparked a genuine wave of enthusiasm among the people. We are well aware that the holding of elections called for considerable logistical and security support from the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia and the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), respectively. And that is indeed an achievement. I warmly congratulate Mr. Keating and the representative of the African Union, as well as my Ethiopian colleague, and, through him, all troop- and police-contributing countries.

The new Somali Administration is already under immense strain. The Secretary-General has just returned from a visit to Somalia and was able to see for himself the seriousness of the humanitarian situation, which, as we know, is being exacerbated by famine affecting the region. The newly formed Government must respond to that situation with the full support of the international community. Above and beyond that emergency situation, it is important for the Somali Government to be resolutely committed to institution-building and the establishment of the genuine rule of law in order to promote improved respect for human rights and lasting stability in the country.

My second point relates to AMISOM and prioritizing the work of the United Nations. Now that elections have been held this year, security will be our primary concern in the years to come. AMISOM has been deployed in Somalia since 2007. Its work, which receives logistical support from the United Nations and financial support from the European Union, is particularly challenging. I would like to pay special tribute to all those who lost their lives in the fight against Al-Shabaab. That fight is a collective endeavour that cannot be won by AMISOM alone. Moreover, it was never intended for AMISOM to be perpetually deployed in Somalia. In that regard, I believe that two points should be underscored.

With regard to the financing of AMISOM, which is not sufficiently predictable or sustainable, France had hoped that other donors would agree to join the European Union in providing considerable financial support. The European Union has already provided some $1.7 billion, in addition to contributions that its member States have made to the budget of the United Nations Support Office in Somalia and the bilateral contributions of some member States. Regrettably, AMISOM funding is still not geographically diverse. The European Union continues to finance 80 per cent of the total required and hopes that other donors will join in that effort.

With regard to the withdrawal of AMISOM, we understand that some troop-contributing countries are ready and willing to withdraw, and, once again, we pay tribute to them. Nonetheless, it is important that the withdrawal not be dictated only by the schedule of requirements, but that it be linked to developing a security solution for Somalia.

That leads me to my third point, which relates to the ability of the Somalis to be responsible for their own security. That appears to be the key issue on the table for the next reporting period. There are 10,900 soldiers in the Somali army who are eligible for the logistical support provided by the Support Office for

joint operations with AMISOM. At the same time, there are local militias, referred to as the Dervish, tnat also provide security functions.

That raises several questions that could be useful in guiding our discussions. Are the soldiers of the Somali National Army well identified? How might the training and operationalization of the Somali National Army be conducted? Could UNSOM step up its efforts to coordinate training and furnish equipment, with a view to providing a more coherent response to the needs of the Somali National Army? How can existing Somali security forces be more involved in security operations in the country and in Somali National Army offensives? We welcome the holding in May of the London conference, which we hope will provide some answers to those questions, and we look forward to future reports on AMISOM and the presence of the United Nations in Somalia in the new post-election period.

The meeting rose at 12.25 p.m.